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Contact: Maria Reppas, (202) 225-6631 / (202) 527-0149 [maria.reppas@mail.house.gov](mailto:maria.reppas@mail.house.gov)

**Washington, DC** – Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-04) today joined 74 Members of Congress (73 Democrats and 1 Republican) in sending a letter requesting the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to clarify its regulations for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) taxpayers who are married or in domestic partnerships. Presently 19 states recognize some legal same-sex relationships. The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) does not recognize these legal relationships for federal tax purposes, leaving same-sex couples uncertain about how to complete their taxes.

"The LGBT community still faces discrimination in this country and that is unacceptable. In this case, it's even more disturbing when this discrimination comes from our federal government," said Congresswoman McCollum. "The IRS has the ability to provide federal tax guidance to same-sex couples, and it should have done so years ago. The LGBT community deserves to be treated fairly and equally by the U.S. government not only for federal tax purposes but in any other situation."

Because DOMA does not recognize same-sex relationships for federal tax purposes, LGBT taxpayers do not have clear guidance on tax regulations. For example, although the IRS recognizes community property rights for same-sex couples, the agency has not issued official guidance or updated systems to track income for same-sex couples.

The Congressional letter states, "The IRS has the ability to provide specific guidance to ease the complexity and uncertainty surrounding these couples. While full equality cannot be achieved without repealing DOMA, this guidance will provide significant relief to hundreds of thousands of taxpayers, and save critical resources by avoiding unnecessary audits and inappropriate enforcement actions."

Specific guidance for LGBT taxpayers will provide them with clarity and relief as they navigate the federal tax system. The IRS will also save money and time by avoiding wasteful audits of same-sex couples.

*Congresswoman Betty McCollum serves on the House Appropriations and Budget Committees.*

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